

Message Text

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ACTION DLOS-09

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 ACDA-12 AGRE-00 AID-05
CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00
DOTE-00 EB-08 EPA-01 SOE-02 DOE-11 FMC-01 TRSE-00
H-01 INR-10 INT-05 IO-13 JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 NSF-01 OES-07 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-05 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 AF-10 EA-10 EUR-12 NEA-10 OIC-02
/181 W

-----018814 090006Z /17

R 081525Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6747

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 2182

FOR S/AR AMBASSADOR RICHARDSON

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: LOS, CO
SUBJ: MEETING WITH HEAD OF COLOMBIAN LOS DELEGATION

1. IN A MARCH 7 MEETING WITH COLONEL LONDONO, CHIEF OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S FRONTIERS DIVISION, WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR LOS AFFAIRS, I RAISED YOUR INTEREST IN CLOSER COLLABORATION WITH THE HEAD OF THE COLOMBIAN LOS DELEGATION. LONDONO WAS ENTHUSIASTIC OVER THE PROSPECT AND SAID THAT HE WAS SURE THAT THE DELEGATION HEAD WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE A MEETING WITH YOU. COLOMBIA OF COURSE HAS A NUMBER OF ITS OWN AXES TO GRIND, INCLUDING PROTECTION OF ITS FUTURE NICKEL PRODUCING INDUSTRY, DUE TO COME ON STREAM IN A FEW YEARS. IN ORDER TO ARRANGE SUCH A MEETING, IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR ME TO HAVE AN IDEA OF YOUR ITINERARY PRIOR TO THE

LOS CONFERENCE SO THAT THE DELEGATION HEAD COULD MAKE PLANS TO MEET WITH YOU IN WASHINGTON, NEW YORK OR GENEVA.

2. THE HEAD OF THE COLOMBIAN DELEGATION IS LIKELY TO BE GESFMAN
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ZEA, WHOM YOU MAY REMEMBER FROM PREVIOUS SESSIONS, WHERE HE ALSO LED GOC DELEGATIONS. ZEA, A FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER, IS MODERATE, FRIENDLY TO THE U.S. AND WELL VERSED IN LOS MATTERS. HE PACKS POLITICAL POWER IN HIS OWN RIGHT SINCE HE IS VERY CLOSE POLITICALLY TO FOREIGN MINISTER LIEVANO AS WELL AS TO THE LIBERAL PARTY'S PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE IN THE JUNE 1978 ELECTIONS, JULIO CESAR TURBAY. UNFORTUNATELY, THERE IS A CHANCE THAT THIS LATTER

RELATIONSHIP COULD, AT THE LAST MOMENT, REMOVE HIM FROM THE LOS PICTURE SINCE TURBAY MAY CALL ON HIM TO ASSIST IN HIS CAMPAIGN.

3. IN THIS EVENT, ALTERNATES TO REPLACE HIM WOULD PROBABLY BE EITHER JOAQUIN GORI, COLOMBIA'S NEWLY APPOINTED AMBASSADOR TO THE OAS, OR HECTOR CHARRY SAMPER, GOC AMBASSADOR IN GENEVA FOR INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS. NEITHER HAS ZEA'S POLITICAL WEIGHT. GORI IS A CAREER FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL WHO IS KNOWLEDGEABLE ON LOS MATTERS. HE IS FRIENDLY TO THE U.S. BUT COULD BE AN EXCEPTIONALLY TENACIOUS NEGOTIATOR IN DEFENSE OF COLOMBIAN

INTERESTS. CHARRY HAS NO BACKGROUND IN LOS MATTERS BUT PRIDES HIMSELF ON BEING A QUICK STUDY. HE IS A LAME DUCK LIBERAL CONGRESSMAN, FORMER AMBASSADOR IN CARACAS, IS BRIGHT AND SOMEWHAT ARROGANT. FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCES HAVE TOLD US THAT HE HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN EMBARRASSING SITUATION SINCE HIS ASSIGNMENT TO GENEVA, WHICH MAY HAVE UNDERMINED HIS CREDIBILITY AT THE MINISTRY.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LAW OF THE SEA, MEETING DELEGATIONS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BOGOTA02182
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780105-0300
Format: TEL
From: BOGOTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780395/aaaadbzm.tel
Line Count: 81
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 8fd597cb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION DLOS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3409648
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MEETING WITH HEAD OF COLOMBIAN LOS DELEGATION
TAGS: PLOS, CO, US, LOS
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/8fd597cb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014